



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

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News Release

Mexican national sentenced to 12 years for drug conspiracy *Imported cocaine and marijuana from Mexico and California to Chicago*

CHICAGO — A member of the “Mendoza Organization” drug trafficking enterprise was sentenced to more than 12 years in federal prison for his role in importing and transporting cocaine and marijuana from Mexico and California, and then distributing it in Chicago, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio. This sentencing is the result of an investigation conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Kane County Sheriff’s Office.

Leonardo Angulo, 42, of Sonora, Mexico, was sentenced Friday by U.S. District Judge Ronald A. Guzman to 151 months in prison and faces deportation to Mexico after he completes his sentence.

ICE agents began investigating the Mendoza Organization in June 2003 after seizing 1,800 pounds of marijuana concealed inside Mexican pottery destined for a warehouse in Bensenville, Ill. Twelve defendants, including Angulo, were indicted in November 2004 by a federal grand jury in the Northern District of Illinois for conspiracy to distribute cocaine and marijuana, money laundering and possession with intent to distribute cocaine. During the investigation, ICE agents seized about 250 additional pounds of marijuana, \$411,000 in narcotics proceeds, 31 kilograms of cocaine, four firearms, and various vehicles and properties in Illinois, Indiana and elsewhere.

Angulo pleaded guilty June 17, 2005, to one count of conspiracy to distribute a controlled substance. According to court documents, the Mendoza Organization obtained wholesale quantities of cocaine and marijuana from Angulo and others in Los Angeles. He then used various couriers to transport hundreds of kilograms of these drugs throughout the U.S. and Mexico. He is the tenth defendant to be sentenced in this case.

“This was an excellent example of teamwork among federal and local agencies,” said Special Agent-in-Charge Elissa A. Brown, who heads the ICE Office of Investigations in Chicago. “We work aggressively to keep drugs out of our communities, and to dismantle the criminal networks that profit from narcotics trafficking.”

Assistant U.S. Attorney John Blakey successfully prosecuted this case for the government.

#ICE#

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.